



THOUSAND LAKES REGION

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

The FUSEE



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Spring 2022

2022 TLR Convention “Brainerd Lakes Express”



The original Northern Pacific Railroad Car shops in Brainerd, MN have been converted into shops and restaurants. The BNSF MOW facility is to the left of the tracks, off camera.

By Art Suel

The Twin City Division of the National Model Railroad Association invites you to the 2022 Thousand Lakes Regional convention in **Brainerd, Minnesota, May 19 to 22**. Brainerd is in central Minnesota and is the home to Paul Bunyan. The Brainerd area is considered Minnesota’s year-round Vacationland. The convention will be at the Arrowwood Lodge at Brainerd Lakes. This hotel is considered one of the best in the area. Among the amenities is a fantastic waterpark.

The Northern Pacific Railroad established their car and machine shops in Brainerd around 1870 and in the early 1920’s, 905 Brainerd residents were employed by the railroad. In the 1950’s, the Northern Pacific Railroad moved the engine overhaul facility to Livingston, Montana. Other

functions were closed by the Burlington Northern Railroad after the merger in 1970. Today BNSF employs around seventy personnel at the maintenance of way facility in Brainerd.

Today, Brainerd has a vibrant retail scene with many specialty shoppes and over fifty establishments to grab a bite or liquid refreshment. The old railroad shops have been repurposed into a facility with nine local shoppes and an Event venue for weddings and parties. On Friday we will visit the shops for lunch (not provided in registration) and hear a presentation while eating on the history of the shops, by Ken Zieska. Everyone will need to drive or carpool. On the way back to the hotel, the convention will stop at the Crow Wing County Museum and a presentation will be given. *Cont. page 2*

Cont. from page 1



Arrowood Lodge at Brainerd Lakes Exterior Front

Friday night attendees can travel (on your own) to Crosslake, Minnesota to visit the Crosslake Model Railroad Club. Besides their HO layout, there are artifacts from the railroads on display.

Saturday will be clinics followed by the banquet and award ceremony. We will finish the night with the always popular "Lucky Number Auction."

The convention will conclude Sunday morning with



Google Earth view of the Brainerd NP/BNSF shops. The white buildings are the BNSF MOW shops and the lower left are the original NP shops.

the annual general membership meeting and election of board members.

This year there are two ways to register. The traditional way by filling out a form and mailing it back with a check or you can go to Eventbrite.com, fill out the form and use a credit card to pay for the registration. Using Eventbrite, we can take reservations up to the date of the convention and you do not have to rely on the mail getting it to the registrar by the mailing date. Hotel is holding 49 rooms until April 19, 2022, for our group. After that date, it will be first come first served as Brainerd is an extremely popular destination.



The Crosslake Model Railroad Club. You can drive or carpool to the Club Friday night for their Open House.



View from the Cab

President Jay Manning

IT IS TIME TO TURN THE LIGHTS ON.

The Thousand Lakes Region has been basically shut down for 2 years from activities, events, and gatherings. Admittedly that was not by choice but consider the scope of the issue. We encompass regulations promulgated by four states, national guidance, and the United States Federal Government, and the government of Canada. In addition, we have been “bombarded with inconsistent news stories.” In spite of all this the TLR has maintained an emphasis on communications with its members from the Region down through the Divisions, and individual to individual. Certainly, the growth of the hobby has slowed down at all levels. I will concede that new methods of communications have evolved and are still evolving. It is time to turn the lights back on and get the hobby moving with momentum again in our Region.

Let’s step back a little and examine some of the things that were lost. We cancelled a Region Convention where we have always had clinics that were designed to improve the modeling skills of the participants, a loss that can be overcome by having an aggressive clinic schedule at upcoming conventions. We need clinicians to step up, volunteer and present the clinics that have meant so much to participants and the growth of the hobby. On the other side of this coin, we lost the ability of our members to bring works to conventions for evaluation in every category. We had an enthusiastic spirit coming forward for the evaluation room. That loss “slowed down” the development of modeling skills of members—we all learn from others viewing our individual work and commenting on it. Some of that loss cannot be measured—for example enthusiasm. As you will see in the coming months, we have a new emphasis on pursuing all aspects of the Master Model Railroader status. We lost the comradery of meeting, greeting, and cajoling with fellow members. During this period the TLR also lost several of its very strong modelers, a loss that cannot be measured.

In 2021 the TLR again hosted an annual convention in Bismarck, ND. With careful planning and execution, the convention was a success. Close coordination with the host hotel, and government health agencies allowed the convention to proceed. Attendance was not unexpectedly down, enthusiasm was up. The clinics were widely attended, and the clinicians were more than happy to “hang out” to provide a complete learning process. We all missed the participation by our Canadian friends, but government regulations severely impacted their ability to participate.

We are looking to the future to their enthusiastic participation in TLR activities once the “walls come down.” The “Contest Room” was restructured to accommodate visitor’s ability to view entries. The tours offered exceptional learning experiences. The auction was a “resounding success” with humor thrown in as usual along the way. The annual convention is well on the way “to being well.”

Train shows were lost in 2020 and began a slow recovery in 2021. I say slow only from the aspect that there were and are still regulations impacting them. What was learned in 2021 was that there is a huge pent-up demand for shows both among sellers and patrons. Vendor tables were sold out at 2 shows in the Region and attendance records were set at the same 2 shows. Once again, the key is careful planning and compliance with local regulations, a little extra effort expended up front brought huge dividends for the sponsoring Divisions and Vendors.

Train shows open other doors for the Divisions showing their layouts both in gaining membership and opportunities to “meet and greet” the public at other events. The TLR has one Division, the DSED, that received invitations to do presentations at several town celebrations, an assisted living facility, a library, the largest entertainment facility in Sioux Falls (the Pavilion) and a museum. Every one of these activities is an opportunity to display the hobby and discuss the benefits of it. A new activity in Sioux Falls developed last year; the Board of Education asked the DSED to do a class on building T track. They agreed to try and it sold out; they were asked to do a second one and it sold out. The Division picked up 4 new members. Adult education can mean more than adults, they had several families participating. That effort all started when a staffer from the Board of Education was visiting the annual DSED show and took the idea to her supervisor. The bottom line is that Divisions MUST SEEK opportunities to present the hobby and discuss the techniques and benefits of it.

It is time for the TLR Divisions to turn the spotlight on themselves and hobby, in the upper Midwest there are many many “closet model railroaders.” They came out at the limited number of train shows with a pent up demand for equipment, supplies, education, and a chance to talk about the hobby. Lots of problem solving was accomplished in very short periods of time at train shows.

The TLR has another need to “turn the light on.” The leadership of the Region all has term limits on their service as a Region Board Officer—5 years. The bylaws also have a provision that requires a one-year break in service before an individual can

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From the Cab (cont.)

again be elected to the Board. I encourage Division Superintendents to get involved in the process of developing individuals willing to serve on the Board. Being officer on the Board is not an onerous task: we have a set of bylaws that clearly set out the duties; the Region does Board meetings electronically; we have a once-a-year convention; and only encouragement to attend Division activities near you. There is no requirement to attend national conventions. The NMRA does most of its business elec-

tronically, and tasks to Region Presidents are minimal—the most serious is reporting the name of the individual who has been chosen by you to be recognized for Service the Division. In 2020 when we did not have a convention, I prevailed on the officers up for replacement to volunteer for another year—all did. The Region needs to start developing interest in serving on the Board of Directors of the Region---PLESASE TURN THE LIGHT ON BRIGHTLY.

THE FOLLOWING TLR BOARD POSITIONS ARE UP FOR ELECTION AND RE-ELECTION.

Gerry Miller, Election Chair

The positions up for reelection this year are President (Jay Manning), Vice President (Caleb Van der brink) and Treasurer, (Tom Gay). All three have reached their term limits and will be rotating off the TLR board.

The TLR is a volunteer origination and without volunteers we will not exist. Serving on the Board of Directors will qualify you for the AP incentive. Once you earn your first AP certificate you will receive \$50.

If you are interested in running or have questions about one of these positions, please contact TLR President Jay Manning (chessie@manningperry.com), or TLR Nomination Chairman Gerry Miller (millerg20@gmail.com).

The list of duties for the positions up for election are listed below-

President - The President shall:

Preside at all meetings of the Region and of the Board of Directors
Be an ex-officio member of all committees
Perform such other duties as, by custom, devolve upon a President or are conferred upon him by the Region or the Board of Directors

Vice-President - The Vice-President shall be:

The aid and assistant to the President and shall assume the duties of the President in his absence or at his request
The Chairman of the Advisory Council.

Treasure

1. Have charge of the Region finances.
2. Keep accurate records reflecting monies received, monies disbursed and balance on hand
3. Collect all Region dues and revenues from any Region sponsored activity.
4. Ensure that the books are ready and available for audit.
5. Provide a report and financial statement at the General Business Meeting.

Convention Program

(subject to change without notice)

Thursday May 19, 2022

3:00 – 7:00 PM Registration open

3:00 – 7:00 pm Celebration Room Check in

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

7:00 - 8:00 pm Clinic: Explore the Contest Room, Celebrate Arts, Crafts, Photography and Model Railroading by Kennedy Gauger

8:15 - 9:15 pm Clinic: Wet Pallet Painting

Friday May 20, 2022

7:00 – 9:00 am Free grab and go complimentary breakfast available at front desk

7:30 – 10:30 Registration Open

8:00 – 10:30 Celebration Room Check in and viewing

9:00- 10:00 Clinic: T Track Modules and Modules to build your Division

10:30 - 11:30 Tour and presentations at the Northern Pacific Shops complex

Clinic: The Northern Pacific Shops in Brainerd, Clinic will be presented at the Shops by Ken Zieska Transportation on your own

1:00 - 2:00 pm Lunch on your own at Notch 8 in the shops complex.

Clinic: The Cuyuna Range by Ken Zieska

2:15 - 3:15 pm Tour of the Crow Wing County Museum by Hillery Swanson

3:15 Return to Hotel

3:30 - 4:30 pm Clinic: Effective transportation and storage of Model Trains by Larry Vanden Plas

4:30 Dinner on your own

6:30 – 8:30 pm Visit to the Cross Lake Model Railroad Club (formerly the Northern Minnesota Railroad Heritage Center. Transportation on your own.

8:30 pm Board of directors Meeting

Saturday May 21, 2022

7:00 – 9:00 am Free grab and go complimentary breakfast available at front desk

8:00 am Registration open

8:00 – 10:00 am Celebration Room Check in and viewing

10:00 – 2:30 pm Celebration Room Judging, no viewing during judging, will reopen once judging is finished.

9:00-10:00 am Clinic: Wet Pallet Painting

10:15 - 11:30 am Clinic: The History of the TLR 1969 National Convention Bid

11:15 – 1:00 pm Lunch on your own

1:00 - 2:00 pm Clinic: Weathering Symposium

2:15 - 3:15 pm Clinic: Weathering Symposium

3:00 – 4:30 pm Pick models up in Celebration Room

3:30 - 4:30 pm Clinic: My journey to earning the MMR by Dave Hamilton

5:30 – 6:30 pm Social Hour

6:30 pm Banquet

7:30 pm Awards and Auction

Sunday May 22, 2022

7:00 – 9:00 am Free grab and go complimentary breakfast available at front desk

9:00 am Annual General Membership Meeting.

All Celebration Room forms and rules can be found on pages 20-27, or click on this link: <https://www.thousandlakesregion.org/celebration-room->

Members traveling from Canada please check border crossing regulations before you travel.

2022 THOUSAND LAKES REGION CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

<p style="text-align: center;">2022 TLR CONVENTION MAY 19 - 22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sponsored by the Twin City Division of TLR</p> <p>Arrowwood Lodge at Brainerd Lakes 6967 Lake Forest Rd Baxter MN 56425</p> <p>Room reservations 218-822-5634 Mention TLR NMRA Convention</p>	<p>Note you must be a member of the National Model Railroad Association to attend. Membership will be checked.</p> <p>Spouses or significant others need not be NMRA members to attend Saturday night banquet or non rail events</p>
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Name _____ NMRA # Required _____
 Spouse/Guest Name _____ Expiration Date _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____
 Phone _____ Email _____
 Primary scale you model O S HO N

EVENTS AND PRICING	PRICE	TOTAL
EARLY BIRD MEMBER/GUEST/SPOUSE REGISTRATION (POSTMARK BEFORE MAY 1 2022)	\$68.00	
INCLUDES SATURDAY BANQUET : Chicken / Beef buffet		
REGISTRATIONS MAY 1ST OR LATER-- DO NOT MAIL, email Eric Boone or use Eventbrite	\$75.00	
SATURDAY BANQUET ONLY : Chicken and beef buffet	\$28.00	
9 MONTH RAILFANS NMRA MEMBERSHIP FOR NON NMRA MEMBERS	\$19.95	
Rail Pass offer is good in the U.S. only and is for new members and those who have not not been NMRA members for two or more years or more. Individuals can join at Rail Pass rates only once. Rail Pass members can attend conventions and participate in contests but cannot hold office or vote in NMRA events.		
Make checks out to Twin City Division NMRA		
TOTAL		

<p>Mail to: Art Suel 14500 Alabama Ave Savage MN 55378</p>	<p>AFTER MAY 1ST, PLEASE EMAIL ERIC BOONE AT paymaster@tcdnmra.org THAT YOU ARE ATTENDING OR USE EVENTBRITE TO ENSURE AN ACCURATE COUNT FOR THE BANQUET</p>
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If you have special dietary needs, please list them here so committee can make arrangements with hotel kitchen.

Considerations when modeling Midwestern grain scenes

By Jared Seliger

Photos by author

Whether you were born and raised in the Midwestern United States or if you are transplanted here from another part of the country, you know how important the grain industry is to the railroads that service our part of the country. According to the Association of American Railroads (AAR), class I railroads moved 1.5 million carloads of grain in 2020 in the United States. The AAR also estimates that the U.S. has an inventory of over 276,000 freight cars capable of transporting grain which are owned by railroads and other private companies. Since grain trains are such a common site in the Midwest, many modelers choose to incorporate aspects of the industry into their pikes. This article will present some basic aspects to modeling this Midwestern economic staple.

Rolling Stock

The most simplistic way to add the grain industry to a model railroad layout it to include rolling stock capable of moving grain. Even if the layout does not have any grain industries, the addition of freight cars capable of handling grain commodities can add to a layout or yard scene. The best approach to adding grain cars is to identify cars that are specific to the era of your layout. Moving grain via railcars has been occurring since the early 1900s. For most of the first half of the 20th Century, grain was hauled by standard boxcars. Hauling grain commodities in boxcars occurred by bagging the grain before placement in the boxcar or by adding grain doors stacked in the boxcar opening to allow for the filling of the boxcar with loose grain.

The first grain-specific railcars were put into service in the 1950s. Pullman-Standard introduced a 2,839 cubic foot (cf) PS-2 covered hopper in 1953 which was initially used for hauling flour, soymeal and feed, but occasionally used for hauling bulk grain. Throughout the 1960s, the proliferation of covered hoppers occurred with railcars being designed and produced by Pullman-Standard, Magor Car Corporation, Evans, ACF Industries and others which increased the capacity to haul grain. One of the most produced covered hoppers of this era was the Pullman-Standard PS 4,750 cf hopper (this car is designated PS, not PS1, PS2 etc.) with a total production of over 56,000 units³. Other popular covered hoppers of this era were Magor Car Corporation's "Big John" 4,713 cf car and ACF Industries' cylindrical hoppers which had capacities starting in the 3,700 cf range.

Towards the end of the century, the move was towards larger capacity grain cars which were manufactured by Trinity (formerly Pullman-Standard), American Railcar Industries (formerly ACF), and Gunderson. The capacity of these cars is over 5,000 cf. The newer, larger capacity cars have visual differences from their counterparts designed and produced in the 1960s. A staple of the early Pullman-Standard designs was the inclusion of sideposts affixed to the exterior of the straight side panels. The PS 4750 can be identified by the 18 exterior sideposts (Image 1). The larger capacity car design includes a longer overall frame, more rounded car body and no visible exterior posts.

In addition to the railcars capable of hauling bulk grain, a subset of cars capable of carrying refined products like, flour and milled products. These cars include airslide hoppers and modern ACF pressurized cars. Many airslide hoppers are still in use today as buffer cars between locomotives and loaded tank cars.

From a model railroading perspective, all varieties of



Image 1- Pullman Standard PS 4,750 cubic foot hopper.



Image 2- Tangent Scale Models version of the PS 4750cf car on the authors model railroad.

these cars are well represented by all of the major manufactures in all scales and can be found in multiple road name and numbers. An example of an H.O. scale 4750 cf covered hopper produced by Tangent Scale Models is shown in Image 2. If your layout era is set anywhere prior to the 1950s, a fleet of boxcars (specific for that timeframe) can be used to haul grain. If your era is between the 1960s and 1980s, the appropriate cars would be Pullman-Standard, Magor or ACI Industry covered hoppers with capacities around 4,700 cf. If your layout represents present day, it would be common to find large capacity cars produced by Trinity, American Railcar Industries, and Gunderson. Even with a modern-era layout, sprinkling in a few 4750s in your trains is appropriate because many of these cars are still in service, some being 40-plus years old. Image 1 is a PS 4750 that was originally built in 1985 that was spotted in 2020 on the Canadian National line in Iowa.

Industries

Railroads in the Midwest serve multiple industries associated with grain and agriculture. By far, the most common busi-

ness associated with grain production and storage are elevators or cooperatives. Often referred to as “rural skyscrapers,” elevators are found across the Midwest landscape and are present in most communities. The purpose of an elevator is for separation and storage of the grain harvested from the fields. The grain is delivered to the elevator, usually via a farm wagon or tractor trailer and emptied into a pit at the grain elevator. Using a set of augers and belts/buckets, the grain is carried to the head house where it is channeled to the appropriate storage silo. The grain is then stored in a temperature-controlled environment until it is resold or moved to a different facility. Grain elevators have a mechanism to offload the stored grain, predominately via road vehicles or railcars.

The material and design of grain elevators varies greatly by size, location and date built. Older grain elevators are usually made from wood or a steel exterior and are typically a smaller



Image 3– The modern grain elevator is much more complex than the old “prairie skyscraper”.

size. Larger, more modern elevators are typically constructed out of concrete or a combination of concrete and steel storage bins. An example of a modern grain elevator is shown in Image 3.

For railroads to be serviced by a railroad, typically a spur or siding is constructed adjacent to the elevator as to not foul the mainline with cars waiting to be loaded. The most common mechanism to offload grain from an elevator is via an enclosed chute that is center over the track to allow grain to flow into the open trough hatches on the roof of covered hoppers. It is common, especially among grain elevators in Iowa, that grain is loaded to railcars where it is transported to barges on the Mississippi river for transportation to mills and facilities in the southern states or exported.

Another grain storage option, which is more common among individual farms, are using steel bins for grain storage. Because these are used for individual storage purposes, they are typically not served by railroads. Add any of these structures, a modern elevator (Image 4), an older, wooden elevator (Image 5), or grain bins (Image 6) can be added to a model railroad.

A relatively new industry in the United States that railroads are crucial for serving is ethanol production. According to the Iowa Corn Growers Association, the state of Iowa leads the United States in ethanol production by producing over 30% of the total amount of product annually. Currently, Iowa has 42 corn-based ethanol plants spread across the state. Adding an ethanol facility provides an opportunity to add a modern industry to your layout. Although not currently in production, K.M. Wal-



Image 4– Modern grain elevator.



Image 5– Old style elevator.



Image 6– Grain bins making a modern elevator.

thers produced an entire ethanol structure series several years ago that provided an opportunity to create an entire ethanol refinery on a model layout. Even though the kits are not currently in production, they **still** be available through online auction sites or potentially model railroad swap meets. Adding an ethanol plant not only gives you an opportunity to serve the facility with covered hoppers “loaded” with corn and allows for incorporating ethanol tank cars to move the finished product to the distributors.

Adding Landscape and Backdrops

Railfans across the Midwest are very familiar with the sight of trains traversing the rural agricultural with the rails being cut between miles and miles of fields. Adding a corn field to a layout can provide an additional layer of depth to the realism of a Midwest setting. Several manufacturers like K.M. Walthers, JTT Scenery, and Bluford Shops make grain plants in a variety of scales, type of vegetation, and stage of growth. The time frame of my layout is late year during harvest season. The corn



Image 7– Very realistic crops, like this corn, are available from multiple sources. This is JTT Scenery's H.O. "brown" corn stalks.

stalks have stopped growing and the plants have turned brown and dried out. Even though I used the dried-out corn stalks, you can purchase green corn stalks that would be more representative

of the growing season (Image 7).

Another subtle feature of adding agricultural fields is you can create additional focal points by adding farming vehicles and equipment. Because my layout is staged during harvest season, I modeled my field as partially harvested with an H.O. scale grain harvester at work. Other equipment like tractors, wagons, and grain trucks can be moved in and out of the scene.

Finally, backdrops are another way to create a rural landscape on your layout. Several vendors produce backdrops for model railroads in a variety of scenes and sizes. Because I had a very specific vision of what I wanted my backdrop to be, I custom made my backdrop by photographing a corn field in mid-October. I was able to print a large vinyl scroll with my photo-



Image 8– Custom backdrops, or your own photos, allow you to get a great background specific to your region and time.

graph and used adhesive to attach it to plywood which was attached to the rear bench of my layout. The depth effect provided by a backdrop creates the illusion of a train passing by a corn field that is ready to be harvested (Image 8).

Conclusion

Multiple options are available to model railroaders who choose to incorporate aspect of the grain industry on their layouts. Agriculture has been the lifeblood of the Midwestern economy for centuries and that will likely continue for many centuries to come. The technology of farming and agriculture has evolved over the years and so has how railroads service their agricultural customers. From the simplistic beginnings of moving grain in 40-foot box cars to today's unit trains of 5,000 cf hoppers, modelers have many options on how to incorporate this industry into their model railroad layout.

All Images copyright of the author.

Resources:

1. <https://www.aar.org/article/freight-rail-grain/#!>
2. <http://industrialscenery.blogspot.com/2016/12/covered-hoppers-for-grain-haulage.html>
3. Wilson, Jeff. 2015. The Model Railroader's Guide to Grain. Kalmbach.
4. <https://www.tangentscalemodels.com/pullman-standard-ps-2cd-4750-covered-hopper/>
5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grain_elevator#:~:text=A%20grain%20elevator%20is%20an,silo%20or%20other%20storage%20facility.

NMRA Achievement Program – Having Your Modeling Efforts Evaluated

Neil Maldeis, MMR

Author's 2 Cents:

Let me start out by stating this article is written based on a combination of my own personal experiences and opinions, while trying to provide some practical “how to” guidance to encourage participation in the Achievement Program or a Celebration (Contest) event. The discussion points that I make are open for debate and I welcome any feedback!

I'd like to start by challenging everyone to try looking at the achievement program/judging process as a way to accomplish your own personal best modeling experience! Regardless of what other modelers think, say or do, there will always be someone that can-do things better in the world and you'll drive yourself crazy! Don't let anything stop you from achieving your best.

Model railroading is a fun hobby and being the best isn't necessarily the reason to participate in the achievement program (I know there are many competitive modelers out there that will disagree & that is perfectly ok). Few hobbies offer such a wide variety of opportunities to learn and build your skills as much as model railroading can. That is what I enjoy most about the hobby as it can provide you a lifetime of learning and growing skills.

The “epiphany” I had was realizing the achievement program truly exists to make you a better modeler. Earning achievement program certificates and eventually your MMR are just the way the NMRA recognizes your hard work and rewards you. I'll admit it is nice to get the recognition, but it shouldn't be the driving reason you participate in the program.

Understandably participating in NMRA Celebration (Contest) events is different than working on your MMR and does have a competitive nature. I like to view competition in a friendly manner as a way for modelers to share and see what others are doing in the hobby and hopefully your contest/celebration entry will win you an award. Even if you don't win an award, your efforts will inspire others to take on a modeling challenge or participate in the future.

Check out the two following pictures and you can clearly see my own modeling has improved over the years and it is mainly because I participated in the achievement program. Without participating in the achievement program, I most likely would have become stuck where I was with my skills and not improved that much over the years.



Early work completed in the 1990's (prior to achievement program participation). Pretty basic construction skills; overall, the layout looks decent; my finishing and weathering need improvement; “is that really a backdrop!”; most of the structures were plastic kits with some kitbashing.

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Work completed within the last ten years shows a huge improvement. All structures are either craftsman wood kits or scratch built and finishing skills have vastly improved. Scenery is much more realistic. Track work and operations are more prototypical.

What's stopping you from participating in the NMRA Achievement Program?

The most common reasons I hear are that "I don't have the time and completing the documentation required is too much work." Like other areas of life, typically anything that is a worthwhile endeavor will require a commitment and effort on your part. The achievement program is no different, you get out of it what you put in.

I don't know what the average time it takes for most modelers to obtain their MMR. I got my first Achievement Program certificate in 2000 and my last one in 2020 to qualify for MMR. I always viewed getting Achievement Program certificates and subsequently, my MMR, as a journey. The time and effort I put into this journey varied over the 20 years. There was a gap of 8 years where I did a nothing toward the AP because work and other life priorities took my time. My point is the Achievement Program is designed to be flexible and you can participate as much as you like and at whatever pace works for you. So, no more excuses!

OK, I get filling out forms and doing write ups to document your work may not sound like fun to a lot of modelers. I'll admit that maybe I am not typical in that I really enjoy the documentation process, however, let's be honest here because the documentation required is not all that hard and I think it is just an excuse not to participate (I'll cover more later on forms).

I apologize if I offend anyone, but really, I think that completing documentation isn't the real reason for not participating. I get having any of your work evaluated may trigger horrible memories from school, parents, work, your boss, etc. I also understand there is belief that the evaluation process can be biased and if you are not already a skilled modeler you are wasting your time. Nothing could be further from the truth. The reasons for all the forms and documentation along with the evaluation/judging has been designed to take bias out of the process (More on the judging process later).

How about considering taking a chance on a new challenge? Think about stepping up and participating in a celebration event (contest) or start working on getting an Achievement Program certificate!

Why are all the forms and documentation needed?

There are many practical reasons that make the forms necessary. The main reason as I see it is to ensure a consistent standard (same for everybody) to work from for evaluating a modeler's work. Remember the NMRA is an international organization with members/modelers from all over the world.

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Having a standard process with accompanying forms/documentation is the only way a fair and equal process may even be attempted. The information required has been developed over the past 50 or so years based on the collective experience of many judges and modelers' input. Is it perfect? Probably not, but like most evolving processes a lot of it has been changed and updated over the years, thus making it better and easier for members to participate.

I have found completing the forms a very effective and efficient way to share/explain the work you have done so that someone with no knowledge of what you have built. Evaluators/judges can quickly review the forms and understand what you have done and how well it stacks up to the requirements of the certificate or celebration (contest) category.

The Judging Process

There are lots of stories out there about judging, "It's not fair, modeling is like art and very subjective", "I don't need someone to tell me how well I model", "I had bad past experience", just to name a few. Frankly these are all valid reasons to be skeptical of the whole process, however, in my opinion, they all miss the mark of the intent of the Achievement Program. *The Achievement Program exists to help you become a better modeler* by comparing your work to a well-established set of modeling standards. (Not another modeler and/or their work)

The judging process and many of the tools/forms developed by the NMRA are the same regardless of whether you are entering a contest or having some of your work evaluated for an Achievement Program certificate. The only difference I have seen in the process is the number of judges/evaluators that evaluate/score your work.

Because contests are usually held at NMRA convention events, there are a lot more people attending that can perform judging. Also, I suspect since the contest is competitive in nature, the more judge's opinions there are, the less likely there will be any bias in the scoring. I think this is the reason we are seeing many regions change their modeling contests to celebrations in order to foster more participation rather than a straight-up competition. Whereas having your work evaluated for an Achievement Program certificate, it is only being scored to determine if the work earns enough for a merit award. In these situations, only a few judges may be needed, especially during the Covid pandemic when one may need to have their work evaluated virtually.

The Points Matrix – The Key Tool for Determining the Points a Model Earns:

Many of the Achievement Program categories aren't judged and only require a modeler to provide evidence that their work was performed and meet the requirement criteria. As work on various Achievement Program categories is undertaken, you will notice many don't have any of your work judged to get the certificate (i.e., Model Engineer - Electrical, Model Engineer - Civil, Chief Dispatcher), but they do need to be evaluated. Theoretically speaking you could complete your MMR with only 2 Achievement Program certificate categories needing your modeling judged.

The categories that do require your modeling work to be judged will all be subject to criteria requirements that use the points matrix concept to determine the actual points you obtain for your modeling efforts. Many matrices have been created but they all work under the same principle. The matrix concept awards the least number of points for a model that is deemed simple in construction (complexity, number of parts, etc.) and demonstrates basic modeling skills by the modeler to construct. More points are awarded as the model increases in complexity and the skills of the modeler are more advanced than with basic modeling skills. (The same concept holds true for celebration/contest events).

What this means is that a very simple model, for example, even if constructed with exceptional skills and workmanship, will not receive the maximum points in the requirements matrix. Realistically this means if you submit, as an example, a small warehouse structure, don't expect maximum points for it even if your modeling skills are exceptional. Conversely, if you build a mega sized refinery with 1000's of parts, but your construction isn't top notch you should not expect maximum points. The graphic on the next page summarizes the matrix concept:

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Simplified Points Matrix

On the next page is an example of the actual Construction Requirements Matrix, note how the points grow down and to the right based on complexity and workmanship. Each of the heading descriptions also have specific definitions (to guide judges how to determine points) as to what would be considered the meaning of headings such as “Good” or “Moderately Complex”.

Cont. page 14

“Rails & Rivers – Mankato 2022”

Chicago & North Western Historical Society’s

Annual Convention Swap Meet

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Sunday,

May 22

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Publishing Deadlines

<u>Publishing Date</u>	<u>Submission Deadline</u>
March 1 Edition	February 1
July 1 Edition	June 1
September 1 Edition	August 1
December 1 Edition	November 1

CONSTRUCTION JUDGING POINTS MATRIX

Quality & Workmanship	Simple Model					Somewhat Complex					Moderately Complex					Very Complex or Difficult				
Poor to Mediocre	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Ordinary	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Good	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Very Good	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
Outstanding	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40		
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40			
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40				
Exceptional	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40				

Actual Points Matrix example

I think when it comes to judging our work, we all can get a little emotional and it doesn't need to be that way. In the beginning of my MMR journey, I was a little that way and always thought I deserved more points, but, once the matrix was explained to me, that clarified a lot for me. I started to use the matrix and self-judge my own work to guide my expectations and to also decide if the model I was building was worth submitting or not. You can actually get pretty good at predicting what your model's score will be by judging it yourself. I found doing this helped me become a better modeler as the way the matrix is structured helps focus you on the real attributes to constructing an exceptional model.

I found myself several times saying to myself, "this won't get me many points in a certain category", should I do something different to improve the model or not? Frankly, in some cases, I didn't change anything and had the model evaluated knowing I would only get so many points (e.g., my powerhouse model example below). That is ok, because to get a merit award you only need 87 ½ points. Obviously, if you want to win at a celebration (contest) event you might want to consider a different strategy!

A Real Example of Evaluation/Judging:

The form that follows is the one I completed for a structure I had judged as part of acquiring my structures certificate. I only used this one form to describe the work I did on the model and it took less than 20 mins to complete. If I had to do this again, I would use a separate sheet to describe the categories in more detail and not cram as much information as I did on the form. You can see that I didn't need to provide any more information as I received enough points to earn a merit award. If I were entering this model in a celebration(contest) it might receive more points if I did a better job completing the information in the form.

Even though I spent a considerable amount of time on this model, note that I didn't receive more than 25 points for construction. The reason for this is that I used commercially made wood stock for the walls, this fact reduces the complexity a lot and thus, does not deserve higher points. Conversely, the model scored high on detail because I included an interior and power generation equipment (inside and out). I learned a lot by having this model evaluated/judged!

Cont. page 15



Powerhouse model I submitted for merit award evaluation

Cont. page 16

The Dakota Southeastern Division of the NMRA invites you to our annual

Greater Sioux Falls Model Train Show

March 26th and 27th, 2022

Saturday 10:am – 5pm

Sunday 10am – 4:00

Presentations, train
layouts and vendors.
Run trains.
Fun for the whole family!



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Admission: \$5.00 per person - Children 12 and under free with paid adult

Model Railroad Layouts will be on display for viewing and operating.

Visit us: dakotasoutheastern.org; Facebook: Dakota Southeastern Division of NMRA; Email: dakotasoutheastern@gmail.com

JUDGES' SCORE SHEET for NMRA MODEL CONTEST

Model Description: Power House Structure & Generation Equipment Entry No. _____

Describe the model in detail. Check all of the items that apply. Add additional data where applicable. Attach extra pages with photos/plans/drawings and additional description as needed to convey to the judges why and what you did to build this model. Add as much additional information as needed to provide information about the work you did and the techniques you used.

1. CONSTRUCTION (Maximum 40 Points)

Points Awarded

25

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drew my own plans. | <input type="checkbox"/> Followed construction article | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Used prototype plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut and fit metal | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut and fit cardstock <input type="checkbox"/> Soldered |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Used kit plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut and fit plastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut and fit glass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Used commercial plans | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cut and fit wood | <input type="checkbox"/> Crosskitted or kitbashed |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Made patterns |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Made molds |

Describe in detail how model was built, complexity of construction, and materials used:

Model is constructed of standard wood shapes & Aged Brick sheets from Monster Model works that I had windows & doors cut out by LASER based on scale drawings I prepared as templates. Foundation, floors & caps on brick were added to give a more complete look to building. See attached sheets that describe process to figure out how to build structure

2. DETAIL (Maximum 20 Points)

Points Awarded

18

Describe complexity, difficulty, refinement, amount of additional detail parts added.

Since the building itself is not complicated as many details internally & externally were added. A steam boiler and generator was constructed outside details for a substation and misc details to support a power plant were added. A separate power distribution pole is also included. Interior lighting was installed

3. CONFORMITY (Maximum 25 Points)

Points Awarded

20

Give information as to prototype modeled or explain logic of design. Include copies of photos, drawings and plans.

Original structure was reviewed by consulting engineer as typical for turn of twentieth century. Research completed provided archive photo/drawings for typical generation equipment used. While model is not an exact duplication the structure & equipment would be typical of the 1900-1930's see attached drawings & photos

4. FINISH and LETTERING (Maximum 25 Points)

Points Awarded

19

- Finish: Weathered Non-weathered Spray Airbrush Mask and spray
 Signs & Lettering: Decals Hand letter Dry Transfers Photo reduction Photo etching

Describe finish and lettering methods in detail

Most of the model was finished using a chalk & alcohol mix then sprayed with Dulcote to bring out mortar lines. Windows and doors were spray painted with acrylic paint. Remainder of parts were brush painted. Various shades of chalk were used to weather model. Dry Transfer & printed signs were used for lettering

5. SCRATCHBUILDING. (Maximum 15 Points)

Points Awarded

9

List all parts you have fabricated. Note any special or unusual features added.

ENTIRE structure built using Monster Model works Old Brick sheets
 Steam turbine generator built from plastic shapes (see photos)
 Transformers built from plastic & card stock shapes. (see photos)
 Sub station gate door built from strip wood w/ details added. Interior switch gear & piping from wood/plastic/wire shapes

This space for Contest Committee only.

FINAL TOTAL

91

Score Tabulated by _____ Verified by _____

NMRA Contest Form 902 Rev B, 23 July 2000. All previous versions of this Form are obsolete.

Next example:

Further documentation materials (paperwork) may be required with some of the achievement program categories (Prototype Model for example, see arrow on form below). Typically, you need to provide an explanation, description, drawing or other methods/examples to show to the evaluators/judges that you understand the requirements and/or have completed the work. It's up to you as to how much you want to do here. My experience has been that the more

thorough of a job you do to provide insight into the “what and how” you did your modeling, the better. More information is better than less and the easier you can make things for the evaluators/judges, the greater the chance you will receive a better score. If you don’t state in your documentation, for example, that you scratch built six windows in your structure, the evaluator/judge may not recognize this fact and you would lose (or not receive) deserved points in the scratch building category.

I knew because of the pandemic, judging was going to be performed virtually, so I decided to type up my descriptions (rather than submitting them handwritten) for the Prototype Model certificate. The following are the prototype requirements form and an example (one page, several were needed) of how I documented that I was meeting the certificate requirements. I provided a lot of information to describe why/how the work was done.

	ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM MASTER BUILDER PROTOTYPE MODELS STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS FORM FEBRUARY 2019	page 1 of 2
---	---	-------------

Member's Name: _____ NMRA #: _____ Exp: _____
Street: _____ City: _____ State/Prov: _____
ZIP/PC: _____ Country: _____ NMRA Region: _____ Division: _____
Date Submitted: _____ E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____

To qualify for this certificate, you must:

1. Construct an animated or static model of a prototype scene containing at least six models of prototype equipment or structures. At least four different types of models must be represented. They are: rolling stock, railroad structure, caboose or passenger car, and a motive power. Any two of the six models must be scratchbuilt. The remainder must be superdetailed. Plans or photographs must be provided to verify the final prototypical appearance of each model and of the total scene.

2. Earn a Merit Award of at least 87.5 points with the above scene.

3. Prepare a written description along with photographs, documented evidence and/or maps which will verify the actual prototype scene used as a basis for the modeled scene.

4. Provide color photos and a written description of materials and methods used to build the scene.

5. Submit a completed Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) which shall include the following:

- Attachments for Requirements 2 & 3 above.
- The signed Merit Judging forms from Requirement 2 above.
- The supplemental material with the photographs of both the model and the prototype attached.

Prototype Models – AP Certificate Requirements

Requirement 1: Build Prototype Scene with models in the 4 model categories (6 total models, 2 scratch built). I have used 9 models total (5 scratch built) required for the prototype scene:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Category 1 | Rolling stock (All of the following cars received merit awards):
Scratch built Boxcar
Scratch built Flatcar
Scratch built Gondola |
| Category 2 | Railroad structure
Scratch built Feed Warehouse
Scratch built Utility Shed
Kit built Goose barn (Narrow Gauge Colorado)
Kit built Depot (AMB) Additional details as per what could be seen in pictures |
| Category 3 | Caboose or passenger car
Goose # 4 (Lambert) |
| Category 4 | Motive power.
2-8-0 Engine # 40 (Blackstone) Re-lettered markings to be current with time period, added spark arrestor |

Requirement 2: Earn Merit Award for Scene constructed above (Will coordinate with J. Hotvet - TLR - AP Chairman)

Requirement 3: Written description with photographs, documented evidence and/or maps, which will verify the actual prototype scene, used as a basis for the modeled scene.

The prototype scene chosen to be modeled is the Depot, Goose barn and engine coal loading area located in the town of Dolores Colorado situated along the Rio Grande Southern (RGS) railway. The time period selected is in the 1935 - 1945 range. (Scene was inspired by post card and photos below)

Many sources of pictures of the scene from the internet, books and recent photos taken of the area were used to recreate the scene. The pictures I found ranged from 1907 to 1951. I decided to base the scene in the early 40's timeframe as the condition of the structures at that time were still in relatively good condition, but, were somewhat heavily used and weathered. I also had the rolling stock and locomotive power available in my roster for the time period available. Later dated photos included in my documentation were used to understand placement of the elements, but, were not used to model the condition of the structures. (By 1951 the structures were showing much heavier decay and neglect)

Prototype photos used to create the scene (Larger photos are included under Tab 2) Photos below appear were taken between 1939-1941



West View of Depot



Front View of Depot



East View of Depot

Some of the write-up I did to meet requirement three

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Final Thoughts:

When you have something judged understand the score you receive and be critical of yourself. Most of the time you will conclude, "yeah, the judges were right". If you don't agree that is fine too, seek out the Achievement Program Chairman, the Contest Director and have a discussion with them. You may obtain input directly from the judges following the event. Work with the Contest Director to ensure that you get the information that you seek. You may not get anything changed, but at least you will know why you received the points you did and hopefully get some constructive suggestions on how to improve. Again, my point that I will overstate again is the Achievement Program is really a way for you to become the best modeler you can be, if you truly embrace the process, tools and the people supporting you.

There is plenty of time to build something to bring to the TLR regional convention in Brainerd this May! I hope you take the challenge and we see you with an entry for the Celebration room.

Where to find Achievement Program and Celebration (Contest) Materials

All of the judging criteria is documented and can be found on the NMRA website for you to review and download.

Take some time and check out the judging documents. You will see they do a very good job of taking what might be a subjective subject and turning it into something that can be applied in a much more objective manner:

<https://www.nmra.org/definitions#judging>

https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/2006-judging-guide-lines_0.pdf

The forms and criteria for Achievement Program certificate categories and celebration (contest) participation can also be found on the NMRA website. The following links should help you get started finding the information you will need to participate. There is a lot of information out there so take your time and look through all the various pages and determine what you need to understand and what documents to download for whatever activity(s) you decide to do.

<https://www.nmra.org/forms>

[Much of this information is also on the TLR Website under the Celebration Room tab.](#)

<https://www.thousandlakesregion.org/celebration-room>

44th Annual Spud Valley Hobby Show

Sunday, October 16, 2022

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

(under 12 free with paid
adult)

NEW LOCATION

**Red River Valley
Fairgrounds**

Hart Building

**1805 Main Ave W.
West Fargo, ND**

Call Don—701-234-9351 or email spudvalley@hotmail.com

- ◆ Large and small operating model Railroads
- ◆ Vendors selling farm toys, plastic models, model railroad items, die cast vehicles, old toys, railroad collectibles and more
- ◆ Door prizes
- ◆ Valley RC Flyers display their planes

Minneapolis & Northland



Railroad Company

I enjoy model railroading and want to share my experiences with you! You can see my build of kits, how-to's, painting information and much more on my internet blog. Check out <http://mnrailroadcab100.blogspot.com>.

Lester Breuer, MMR

Contest Rules for the Thousand Lakes Region (TLR) Celebration Room

All Celebration Room forms and rules can be found on this link:

<https://www.thousandlakesregion.org/celebration-room>

This document summarizes the rules for entries made to the Celebration Room during TLR conventions or for judging conducted within the TLR independent of conventions. The TLR rules follow those of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), are adapted from rules established by the Mid-Continent Region (MCoR) of the NMRA, and include TLR-specific additions.

All entries require the specified form, in addition to the "Entrant's Intent Form", which specifies in which contest category the entrant wants her/his entry placed.

Judging is closed to the public but "Shadow Judges" (those learning about the judging process by following the judges during contest judging) are allowed and encouraged to participate. Shadow judges also serve as scribes by recording notes for each of the entries submitted. These should be shared with the entrant after judging. Judging is closed to the public to ensure that the Contest Room is quiet and to allow judging teams to concentrate. However, entrants seeking AP Evaluation may be in the Celebration Room to observe the process BUT they are not allowed to speak. This allows those who desire to have their entry evaluated by judges to learn from the process. Any disputes among judges or during entry of models will be resolved by the Contest Director who is the final authority.

Submission by proxy. When an TLR NMRA member is unable to attend a convention or other TLR event where model contest judging is occurring, the individual may submit the entry by proxy, whereby another person who is attending the event can submit the entry on the member's behalf. The TLR member is responsible for completing the entry paperwork as if she/he were attending the event in person.

Events –

1. Judged Model Contest -- For models in this section (Section 1) submit NMRA Forms 901, 902 and supplemental information.

1.1 Definition - Competitive events for models: all entries are technically judged by teams of experienced judges using a point scoring system based on a standardized matrix.

1.2 Scale - All models shall be judged separately in each classification and category without regard to scale.

1.3 The model must have been made by the entrant and cannot have won a first place at any previous National or Regional Convention.

1.4 Classifications

1.4.1 Scratch Built - This class is intended for models built largely from basic or scratch materials. However, any model may be included in this classification. The decision is up to the entrant. Entries in the scratch built class are eligible for full point scores on all factors including scratch built which has a maximum score of 15 points for a total of 125 points. The focus in judging is the model, not the tools to build the model. For example, the term "scratch built" carries the implication that the builder alone has accomplished all of the necessary layout and fabrication, which establish the final dimensions, appearance, and operating qualities of the scale model. This definition does not prevent the use of any tools or jigs as long as the builder alone has done the work necessary for the tool to make the part. This would include drawings or computer files to run computer numerical control (CNC) machining, automatic lathes, laser cutting machines, 3-D printers, and other tools. If a third party changes the builder's inputs, then the parts are not considered to be scratch built.

1.4.2 Kit Built - This classification is intended for models comprised of more than 50% kit or largely commercial parts to allow them to compete with similarly built models rather than typically higher scoring scratch built models. However, any model may be included in this classification. The decision is up to the entrant. *Entries in this classification are eligible for full point scores on all factors except scratch built which is limited to 8 points for a total of 118 points.*

1.4.3 Merit Evaluation -- (Form 901, Form 902, and supplemental information, required for all)

1.4.3.1 Definition – Entrant seeks input from Judges regarding entry placed in Categories 1,2, 3, or 4 of these TLR Celebration Rules. The intent of the modeler is to obtain feedback from evaluators regarding aspects of the submitted entry. Specifically, what is good about the entry and what might be done to improve the entry (or documentation). This allows a modeler to "get their feet wet" in the contest room with the goal being to have the modeler go through the merit evaluation process and subsequently getting a merit award for their model when improvements are incorporated.

1.4.4 Categories

1.4.4.1 Steam Locomotives - All types of locomotives powered by steam. The model must include an electric motor or other means of propulsion and be capable of operation to be eligible for the category

1.4.4.2 Diesel & Other Locomotives - All other types of locomotives except those powered by steam and passenger revenue carrying types. The model must include an electric motor or other means of propulsion and be capable of operation to be eligible for the category. In the case

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of multiple joined locomotives, at least one of the units must be powered.

- 1.4.4.3 Passenger Cars - All types of passenger revenue carrying equipment, including coaches, observation, mail/RPO, baggage cars as well as powered rail buses and RDC cars. Express reefers and Drover Cabooses are included.
- 1.4.4.4 Freight Cars - All types of freight revenue carrying cars, not including express reefers.
- 1.4.4.5 Caboose - All types, including traditional, bobbers, and transfers type (not Drover, see Passenger Cars, above).
- 1.4.4.6 Non-Revenue - Right-of-way, track maintenance vehicles, rail and inspection cars, railroad cranes and others not considered directly involved in revenue service.
- 1.4.4.7 Traction - All equipment associated with urban, suburban and interurban electrically powered railroads.
- 1.4.4.8 Structures - This category is intended for all individual structures or buildings either on-line or off-line; however, it also includes non-powered locomotives, ship models, freight car loads, cars and trucks, track components such as switches and diamonds and other unusual models that do not fit within other categories at the discretion of the Contest Director. Multiple structures such as a house and garage must be physically connected to be considered a single structure. Likewise, only a detail or details in, on, or otherwise connected to the single structure will be considered during the judging. Any detail not connected to the single structure, will **not** be considered during the judging. A single structure contained within a display may be entered in the structure category in which case only that structure will be judged.
- 1.4.4.9 Display – A display constitutes scenes or dioramas which may include multiple structures, locomotives, rolling stock, scenery elements and other detail. All elements will be judged as a part of the entire scene. (Note that scenery guidelines apply: <https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/education/achievement/pdf/2019-scen-eval.pdf>)

2. Module Contest (NMRA Form 901 required for all; does NOT include Merit Award – Judged items, #1, above)

2.1 Definition - Competitive Event for modules: all entries are judged by a team of experienced judges using a simple ranking system.

2.2 The module must have been made by the entrant (s) and cannot have won a first place at any previous National or Regional Convention.

2.3 Module Definition - A small model railway which includes supplemental scenery and track work which is designed to attach to and operate with other similar modules.

2.4 Scale - All scales shall be combined in each of two classifications.

2.4.1 Classifications

2.4.1.1 Module - Individual - A module entry built by an individual person.

2.4.1.2 Module - Group - A module built by a group of people.

3. Photo Contest -- (Form 901 required for all; special photography guidelines apply: <https://nmra.org/national-photo-contest-judging-guidelines>)

3.1 Definition - Competitive event for photographs, exclusive of slides which are not permitted.

3.2 Photos produced using either film or digital cameras are permitted.

3.3 Each entrant shall be limited to a maximum of ten (10) entries with a maximum of five (5) entries in one category.

3.4 Prints shall be mounted on flat, rigid board or matted with similar material. No folders or glass frames are allowed. Photo and mount shall not exceed 12" x 16" (30cm x 40cm) in size. Minimum mount size is 8" x 10" (20cm x 25cm) and minimum print size is 5" x 7" (13cm x 18cm).

3.5 Prints shall have entrant's name on the back. Prints may be titled on the front. Prints with entrant's name on the front will not be accepted.

3.6 Exposure of the original slide or photo must have been made by the entrant and cannot have won a first place at any previous National or Regional Convention.

3.7 Categories - Each entry shall be placed in one of the following categories:

3.7.1 Model - Black & White Print

3.7.2 Model - Color Print

3.7.3 Prototype - Black & White Print

3.7.4 Prototype – Color Print

4. Pass Contest -- (Form 901 required for all; does NOT include Merit Award – Judged items, #1, above)
 - 4.1 Definition - Competitive event for entrant-made railroad passes: all entries are judged by a team of experienced judges using a simple ranking system.
 - 4.2 Two (2) entries are required in order to show both sides of each pass entered.
 - 4.3 Any type of railroad pass is eligible in the form of a business card or flash card size. All other forms, letters, documents, stock certificates, etc. will not be allowed and will only be accepted as display-only (non-contest) entries.
5. Model Showcase. (Form 901 required for all)
 - 5.1 Definition - Non-competitive display events for models, photos, Arts & Craft or any railroad-oriented display, complete or in process.
6. People's Choice (Popular Vote) -- (Form 901 required for all)
 - 6.1 Definition - Competitive event for models, photos and arts & crafts including direct entries (i.e., People's Choice only) and those also entered in the judged model and photo competitions as well as those entered solely for AP evaluation.
 - 6.2 Entries shall be displayed for evaluation and selection by popular vote by convention attendees. Selection and ranking of the winning entries for all awards shall be determined by the number of votes received. Convention attendees shall be permitted to submit one ballot voting for one entry in each category and for each special award.
 - 6.3 Entries from Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, above.
 - 6.4 Rail Related
 - 6.4.1 Favorite Train

An assembly which must include one or more locomotives(s) and at least one piece of rolling stock and/or at least one caboose.
 - 6.4.2 Locomotives

All types of locomotives including those powered by steam, diesel, electric and other means. The model must include an electric motor or other means of propulsion and be capable of operation to be eligible for the category.
 - 6.4.3 Rolling Stock (all types)

All types including passenger, freight, non-revenue cars and powered rail buses and RDC cars. Caboose are not included in this category.
 - 6.4.4 Caboose

All types including traditional, bobbers, drovers and transfers types.
 - 6.4.5 Structures

All types of structures. No detached detail or scenery or other scenery material shall be allowed.
 - 6.4.6 Display/Module

Modeled scenes which may include structures, detached detail and other scenery elements.
 - 6.4.7 Most Humorous (Thumbs)

This comprises a special category open to all types of humorous models and whimsical creations (Subject to availability of award). First, second and third places are awarded in this event.
 - 6.4.8 Photo Match Model

This comprises a special category that selects the model which most closely matches the supplied photograph. All categories of models are permitted.
 - 6.4.9 Special Category

Often, special categories are indicated in advance with special requirements. Like the other categories in the People's Choice component of the Celebration Room, these are voted on by convention attendees.
 - 6.5 Non-Rail Related (except for Railroadiana)
 - 6.5.1 Definition – these items need not be prepared for the upcoming Celebration event. Items made earlier, that have not been competitively submitted elsewhere, are eligible for submission.
 - 6.5.2 General

General craft entry of any theme
 - 6.5.3 Needlework

Needlework of any theme
 - 6.5.4 Railroadiana

Craft Entry (General needlework, or other creation) with railroad motif.
 - 6.6 Photographs
 - 6.6.1 Model Print

All photographic prints of models.
 - 6.6.2 Prototype Print

Arts and Crafts Rules -Thousand Lakes Region (TLR) NMRA

(adapted from the Lone Star Region, NMRA)

A. General Rules

1. Any conflicts in judging or registration/entry will be resolved by the Contest Director who is the final authority.
2. The Arts and Crafts Contest is open to anyone who is registered at a TLR Region Convention. Entries may be made by proxy as long as the forms are properly completed by the entrant.
3. Each entry must be accompanied by the NMRA Contest Entry Form (Form 901) signed by the entrant along with the TLR Arts and Crafts Judging form.
4. There will be no restriction on the number of articles entered by a single entrant, nor shall any entry fee be charged.
5. Articles will be displayed to permit the maximum inspection (based on space available). If you have a large entry (taking up ten (10) square feet or more) please check with the Region Contest Director to make sure appropriate space will be available.
6. Items that have won First (1st) place at a previous Regional or National NMRA contest are ineligible.
7. The claim check from the NMRA Contest Entry Form (Form 901) must be presented to obtain the article after the contest.
8. Reasonable care and protection will be provided for entries by the Host Committee and the Judges.
9. Neither the TLR nor the Host Convention Committee can assume any responsibility in the event of loss or damage to an article beyond the insurance carried by the NMRA and then no more than the dollar value that is shown on the NMRA Contest Entry Form.
10. No entries will be accepted after 3PM on Friday (unless otherwise posted). This will allow the Region Contest Director and the Host Convention Committee time to ready the room for judging.
11. The Celebration Room will remain closed to viewing during judging (Saturday 10AM to 4PM) (unless otherwise posted). The room will reopen Saturday following judging for viewing.
12. For the protection of the entries, no bags, purses, camera bags, or drinks will be allowed in the model/photo display area. You are welcome to take photos for your personal use.

B. Categories

1. Arts and Crafts General – Other than Railroadana, Needlework can be from a kit (which includes plans, instructions and materials), Pattern (where the entrant acquires materials separately), or an original design from the entrant. Please specify kit, pattern or original on entry form.
2. Arts and Crafts Railroadana – Same as General except entry must have a railroad motif. Please specify kit, pattern or original on entry form.
3. Arts and Crafts Needlework – Same as General except entry is a type of stitchery (knitting, embroidery, needlepoint, sewing, etc.). Please specify kit, pattern or original on entry form.

C. Judging

1. Judging will be done by a team of judges.
2. Points are awarded in the following categories listed on the TLR/NMRA Arts and Crafts Judge's Score Sheet.
 - A. Construction and Materials (maximum of 50 points)
 - B. Difficulty/Complexity (maximum of 30 points)
 - C. Finish and Display (maximum of 25 points)
 - D. Neatness (maximum of 20 points)

D. Awards

1. A plaque will be awarded for First (1st) place in each category.
2. Certificates will be awarded for Second (2nd) and Third (3rd) place in each category.
3. Best of Show will receive a plaque. It is the entry receiving the highest point total on the judges score sheet, from all the entries in the Arts and Crafts contest.



NMRA NATIONAL CONTEST ENTRY FORM

NMRA Form #901 Rev I, 10/27/2019. All previous forms obsolete
Please Print All Information

Entry No. _____

ENTRANT / MODELER

Name _____ Group Name _____ Age (if<30): _____
Address _____ City _____ NMRA #: _____
State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____ New Modeler: _____
Phone: (____)____-____ Cell Phone (____)____-____ Email _____ Region: _____

CONTEST EVENTS

MODEL CONTEST

(Judged)

Classification

- Scratch Built
 Kit Built

Category

- Steam Locomotive
 Diesel & Other Loco
 Traction
 Passenger Car
 Freight Car
 Caboose
 Non-Revenue Car
 Structure
 Display

MODEL SHOWCASE

(Display only, all categories)

- Entry

PHOTO CONTEST

(Judged)

- Model, B&W Print
 Model, Color Print
 Prototype, B&W Print
 Prototype, Color Print
 Working on the Railroad Print
 Panorama Print

RAILROAD PASS CONTEST

(Judged)

- Entry

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

(Popular vote - Direct entry)

Model

- Favorite Train
 Locomotive*
 Rolling Stock*
 Caboose
 Structure
 Display

Arts & Crafts

- General
 Needlework
 Railroadiana
Photo (B&W or Color)
 Model Print
 Prototype Print

Special Award Categories

- Photo Match Thumbs Award

Note - Judged entries are also eligible to be chosen for People's Choice Awards
* - Loco includes steam, diesel & traction; Rolling stk. includes, freight, pass & non-rev.

ENTRY NAME _____

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1. First place or Gold Award winners from previous NMRA National Contests are not eligible.
2. This Entry Form (# 901) must be completed for all entries. Judge's Score Sheets (# 902 for Model Contest and # 903 for Module Contest) must also be completed for each entry.
3. Supplemental information, including plans, photos and other supporting documentation may be submitted. This should be organized in order by judging factor (Construction, Detail, Conformity, Finish & Lettering and Scratchbuilt). However, judges are under no obligation to review this material, and the Contest Chairman may limit this information.
4. The Contest Chairman reserves the right to determine how to display entries. Removal of entries from the Contest Room without approval of the Contest Chairman and presentation of the claim check is prohibited.
5. All entries must have a declared value. (See below.)
6. After filling out this Entry Form and the Judge's Score Sheet, if applicable, return both to the Contest Staff who will provide an Entry no. for the Entry Form, Judges Scoring Sheet, Claim Check and Entry Identification Tag. Place entry with Identification Tag attached in the designated location. Retain the Claim Check, which must be signed and presented to pick up the entry at the end of the contest.
7. I hereby certify that this entry is entirely my/our own work or that the original exposure was made by me. I also hereby release the NMRA and all persons connected with this Contest from any liability due to damage to or loss of the entry greater than that covered by the NMRA insurance coverage.
8. I hereby grant the NMRA photo reproduction rights for publication of this entry in NMRA Magazine or any other publication of the NMRA.

Entrant / Modeler Signature _____

Proxy Signature _____

Entry Value
\$ _____

NMRA CONTEST CLAIM CHECK

I hereby certify that entry # _____ entered the Contest and has been returned to me in satisfactory condition

Entrant / Modeler / Proxy Signature _____

Entry No. _____

TLR Arts & Crafts Contest Judges Score Sheet

Entry Description: _____

Category (check one) **General** **Needlework** **Railroadiana**

Describe your entry in detail. Add other information you feel necessary.

1. **Construction and Materials** (Maximum of 50 points) **Points Awarded** _____
Describe in detail how your entry was made. Note any special materials used.

2. **Difficulty/Complexity** (Maximum of 30 points) **Points Awarded** _____

Kit _____ (10 points Maximum)

Pattern _____ (20 points Maximum)

Original _____ (30 points Maximum)

Describe the complexity of the entry. Note any special techniques required or used. If Pattern or Kit, were any changes made? Was the project adapted from one medium to another?

3. **Finishing** (Maximum of 25 points) **Points Awarded** _____
Describe how the item was prepared for display/use (type of materials, matting, etc.)

4. **Neatness** (Maximum 20 points) **Points Awarded** _____

Judges Comments: _____ **Final Score** _____

Thousand Lakes Region Celebration Room Entry Form Supplement
Entrant's Intent Form First and Last Name Must be Printed and Legible

This entry is being submitted by _____; Member NMRA ID: _____

Entry Number Assigned by Contest Director: _____

Judged Model Contest. Submitted for Achievement Program (AP) Judging to obtain for Merit Award (87 ½ points or higher). (Add initials here: _____)

Other Forms and Documentation

Form 901

Form 902

Supplemental Information

Module Contest. **Not** submitted for AP Judging, but competitively evaluated by simple ranking done by judges.

Other Forms

Form 901b

Any elements of the module (e.g., structures, etc.) maybe submitted separately for AP Judging.

The following item is being submitted for AP Judging:

_____ (Add initials here _____); Supplemental ID Number: _____

Form 901

Form 902

Supplemental Information

Photo Contest

Model Black and White Print: _____ (number of photos)

Form 901 for each photograph

Model Color Print: _____ (number of photos)

Form 901 for each photograph

Prototype Black and White Print: _____ (number of photos)

Form 901 for each photograph

Prototype Color Print: _____ (number of photos)

Form 901 for each photograph

Pass Contest

Front Side of Pass Included

Back Side of Pass Included

Form 901

Modeler's Showcase

Form 901

People's Choice (Popular Vote)

Rail Related Subcategory _____

Form 901 (for each subcategory submitted)

Non-Rail Related Subcategory (**Includes Arts & Crafts**) _____

Form 901 (for each subcategory submitted)

Photograph

Model Print: _____ (number of photos)

Form 901 for each photograph

Prototype Print: _____ (number of photos)

Form 901 for each photograph

From the Archives of the Thousand Lakes....

Matt Lentz, Historian

In memory of Wes Garcia— This was on top in a new box I just opened. He passed away at convention time last year.

How to Dry Paint: Or How to Make a Simple Drying Oven

Article and Photos By Wes Garcia

I cannot take credit for this simple paint drying oven. I found it on the internet many years ago, but did not save the link, just the idea.

For those who don't want to use the kitchen oven, or are not allowed to use it. This simple project may be just what you are looking for.

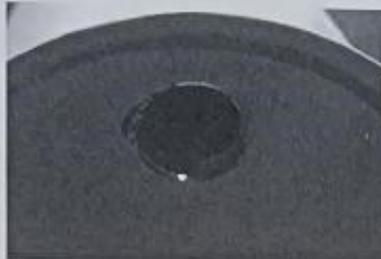
It will take longer to explain how it is made then it will to make one.

Start with one white metal mailbox. Any size will do. Check a big box store like Menards or Home Depot. You will need a chandelier light socket, with metal prongs, and pre-wired with an in line switch. Also, you need a battery powered digital thermometer with a long lead to the sensor, and one light bulb to fit a chandelier light socket.



Chandelier Light Socket

Once you have all the parts, drill a hole in the back of the mail box. The hole size is based on the type of light socket you get. Somewhere on the package it will tell you what size the mounting hole should be.



Hole Drilled in Back of Mail box , Chandelier Socket Installed

On the bottom side of the mail box there should be two mounting holes, one near the back and one near the front. Take the sensor from the thermometer and pull it through the rear opening. If in doubt, before you buy the mail box and thermometer make sure the sensor will fit through the mounting hole. My thermome-



Thermometer Mounted on the Left Side of the Front

ter's sensor had double sided tape to mount it. If your sensor has no tape, just cut a piece and stick it on the sensor.

Now screw in the chandelier light bulb. You are now finished with your paint drying oven.

Mine is large enough to get 80 to 90 percent of items I paint inside. So far the maximum temperature I have seen on my oven is just under 120 degrees. You control the temperature by opening or closing the door.

I have been able to use it for drying paint on metal and plastics without any problems. Give it a try, I think you will like it.



Temperature After Only Being On for About 15 Minutes

In our next issue
find out
who
Tom Gasior is,
and
what he is doing for the
TLR

You will see
his handy work
on
Facebook,
Tweeter
and
Youtube

5th Annual Twin Cities Division Prototype Modelers Meet March 11-12, 2022 Mount Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth.

The TCD Prototype Modelers Meet has become well known for the quality of presentations and displays it features. This year event really lives up to that reputation, featuring outstanding presentations by Clark Propst, Scott Thornton, Bob Rivard, Dan Dossa and Greg Dahl and more. The Minnesota FreeMo group will be set up for operations with staff on hand to help you see how FreeMo can help you get more into and out of Model Railroading. We will have an interesting round table discussion by the “Godfathers” of Operations in the Twin Cities and some of the earlier pioneers and we will be a live recording of an episode of “The Crossing Gate Podcast” on Saturday. Yes, this is a full schedule but there is still more! The display room will be full of amazing models and modelers. Many of the models on display will be completed but others will be in different stages of completion so you can not only enjoy the magic of great modeling but you can see how the magic happens. Included in the display hall will be demonstration tables where you can watch and interact with skilled modelers, see their techniques and tools as they share the secrets to make your modeling better and more enjoyable.

Model Railroading is a participatory activity and YOU CAN be a key part of making the Prototype Modelers Meet even more memorable. Bring examples of your modeling and if you have a project that is still a work in process or perhaps could use a little assistance from another experienced friend bring that also.

The event sign up is on the TCDNMRA webpage. More details will be announced as the event date nears but now is the time to get to work on the models you will bring.



Fantastic displays by nationally known modelers!



Great Displays!



Gather with friends and share knowledge

Fallen Flag: Gordon Miller

By Jay Davis

Before Christmas we received sad news that Gordy Miller passed away. Gordy was very active in model railroading, prototype trains, and photography.

Gordy joined the TLR board at the Sioux Falls convention in 2002 for one year as PR chair, then at Thunder Bay in 2003 he replaced Mike Penn as president.



Gordy helped lay the groundwork with the C&NWS for a joint meet at Mason City, which was his idea. He moved to the TLR's convention chair position at the 2004 convention in Grand Forks, to lead the Mason City planning effort for the 2005 joint meet. This meet proved to be quite successful with about 275 people attending the event.

He stayed on the board two more years to lead the effort planning North Star '06 in St. Paul and worked with Tom Mauzyki for the 2007 convention in Winona. All total he was on the TLR board for about five years. Gordy also served as the PLD (Prairie Lakes Division) superintendent and was very involved with the now defunct Fairmont Model Railroad club.

He is remembered well for his dedication to model railroading. He spent a lot of his time working with the Fairmont club to share the hobby with the public. People fondly remember his excellent prototype photography. He often took home many prizes for his submissions to meet and convention contests. He is also remembered for his willingness to volunteer both his time and energy. In his later years he was part of the effort to restore an AT & SF steam engine down in New Mexico and was able to see it under power once again.

I personally served with Gordy when I was the TLR secretary in 2004-2005. We worked together to plan and host the joint TLR and C&NWS meet in Mason City. He and his wife Bonnie were wonderful to work with and it was a pleasure to get to know them and work side-by-side with them to organize and put on such a massive event. I always enjoyed his many stories. Gordy always had unique stories about his railfanning adventures such as the time he had befriended the train crew in his local town. They were headed to lunch so they told him to go ahead and jump in the cab and take the train down the line to the next town while they ate. His stories always made us laugh. Gordy was also well known the enthusiasm with which he completed every task. He will be sorely missed.



Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, Thousand Lakes Region, NMRA February 4, 2022 7:00PM, Online

Call to Order – President Jay Manning called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call – Secretary Ron Olsen conducted the roll call. Present were President Manning, Secretary Ron Olsen, Treasurer Tom Gay, Convention Director Rich Holzapfel, Contest Director Kennedy Gauger, Public Relations Director Kevin Dill, and Convention Director Scott Nesbit. Division superintendents present were Matt Lentz (SRRV), Gerry Miller (Southeastern), Art Suel (TCD), Scott Nesbit (DSED), and Jay Davis (Prairie Lakes).

Approval of Minutes - BOD meeting minutes from May 21, 2021. No corrections were offered. Kennedy moved to accept minutes as written. Dill seconded. Passed on a voice vote.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Tom Gay reported that we had nothing that came in and that the last convention broke even. Motion to accept treasurer's report as presented by Nesbit. Seconded by Kennedy. Accepted on a voice vote.

Convention Director's Report – Scott Nesbit reported on the following:

2023 – Twin Cities (contact - Greg Smith) will be in Bloomington near Mall of America at Best Western; possible tour at Two Harbors would be extra fare; would like to have open to public; possibly charge more for non-members; meals on your own; probably not have a banquet but would have an awards ceremony. The question was raised whether or not we can have it open to the public. This might be a problem with the insurance coverage for the event. Organizers will need to check on idea of no banquet and having it open to the public. At least one person involved wants to invite guest speakers to the convention. The BOD will need to see a written outline of the 2023 convention plans to make sure things are covered as needed in the bylaws. According to a quick reference by one of the attendees, the bylaws say that an annual convention can occur any time during the year, and there is no requirement for a banquet but it does need to include a business meeting with it.

2024 – Duluth (contact – Greg Smith) no updates on this but it sounds like the plan is still to have it in Duluth for 2024.

2022 – Brainerd (presented by Art Suel) one of the tours for 2022 will be the Cross Lake Model Railroad Club. There will be two ways to pay registration this year – check and credit card through EventBrite. Twin Cities Division has been using EventBrite for division meetings to prevent unauthorized people from disrupting the meetings with good success. Physical convention mailing materials need to get to Kevin Dill within a week to make the mailing deadline. Things on the website

related to 2022 convention should be updated this week. Get any digital info for social media platforms to Tom Gasior.

Contest Director – contest director Kennedy Gauger reported that his major accomplishment was to get the forms and rules consistent across conventions based on national forms and rules. He has also sent out two emails related to the celebration room. The first talks about the People's Choice theme for the upcoming 2022 convention – repurposed car as an offline structure. This could also be submitted in the judged contest as a structure if desired. The second message describes the forms and info needed for items in the celebration room. He encouraged people to read forms 901 and 902 carefully to know what is needed. The celebration room categories have been submitted. The Fusee will include forms and celebration room rules. Voting for the People's Choice award will be limited to NMRA members, especially for the Minneapolis convention.

Public Relations – Kevin Dill said that he didn't have much to report. He was still receiving ads for activities around the region. He also encouraged anyone to send info who has a model railroad that they are willing to have open to visitors. There hasn't been much activity on that lately. The question was asked if there was anything that could be sent to magazines outside of the NMRA for announcements of upcoming events (especially conventions). Kevin says that's the convention director's job. It was suggested that sending to Railroad Model Craftsman for inclusion in their Time-table might be a good idea. Rich said he would look into it.

Division Superintendent Reports

DSED (Scott Nesbit) – went to the threshing bee in July; Washington Pavillion in Sioux Falls in August; Lake Area Technical College in Watertown in September; October at the library in Sioux Falls; November was trains at Christmas – big crowd and community education program as well as new members, activities included making a T-Trak module; December was a small setup at a bank, the Minnehaha Country Club, and Christmas show; January was the downtown library which had a good turnout – the biggest weekend they've had in a long time; they will be at Lincoln, NE, in two weeks; T-Trak is gaining momentum in the area.

Prairie Lakes (Jay Davis) – October 9 was the fall event. It has light attendance of around 80. on December 11 we lost Gordy Miller. He will be deeply missed. Working on a spring event.

Southeastern (Gerry Miller) – Took modules to Monticello; train show next week in Dubuque, IA.

BOD Meeting Cont. next page

BOD Meeting Cont.

South Red River Valley (Matt Lentz) – two members have reached 6 certificates in the Achievement Program. The division is really doing great their push to get people involved in the Achievement Program.

No. 1 Northern (report sent by Ian Plett presented by Art Suel) – the module group was at the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club annual open house; they had a series of workshops on Arduinos for model railroads; they also participated in four or five webinars.

Minnesota River Valley – no report

Twin Cities Division (Art Suel) – virtual layout tour planned for later in February; division meeting for February will be this Thursday; March 11 and 12 will be the Modelers Retreat in Plymouth, MN; registration for the Modelers Retreat will be lower cost this year since lunch is not included on Saturday; the auction usually held at the December meeting was moved to the Modelers Retreat in March due to the weather; May 19-22 will be the TLR regional convention in Brainerd, MN; they will be able to take credit cards for registration which should make things a bit easier for our attendees outside of the US; Ken Zieska is handling the clinics and presentations; Friday of the convention will include a visit to the Cross Lake Model Railroad Club; May 14 will be the division annual business meeting, then the division will break for the summer.

NMRA Canadian Director's Report (John Bate) – no in-person meetings yet; MNRA Dispatch was launched (email); national had the highest response rate ever for survey on the Dispatch; a significant amount of work is currently being done on the digital magazine that was just announced; Gordy Robinson attends a lot of meetings remotely from Scotland!; most activity in Canada is not NNRA but smaller local clubs; lots of lone wolf model railroaders up there; crossing Canadian border is expensive due to Covid test requirements going both ways; test needs to be PCR test (long stick up the nose); might want to include a note for publication to check the border requirements before crossing; St. Louis convention is looking good so far; 2023 Gateway Texas is also looking good; 2024 convention looks like it will be in Long Beach, CA.

Old Business

Handbook revision (Kevin Dill) – nothing has been done on this since this time last year; currently about halfway done; could probably get through it in a couple of sessions; without a special mailing we couldn't get it to the membership prior to the convention; it needs to be approved by the general membership; the question was raised about whether or not it requires a quorum to approve; committee will look at scheduling another meeting late February/early

March; discussion on how to get it out to members for review; board would be the first to review, then on to the general membership after any suggested revisions; membership would then vote on changes multimedia platform update (Kevin Dill) – working with Kennedy and Matt; still in progress; will look at options and recommend to BOD.

New Business

Grants – none

Awards – Bob Dew Sr. Award and Stafford Swain Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award; nominations to Jay for both awards within the next couple of weeks; these are voted on by only the 7 officers; NMRA national award – service to the division – each region nominates one person, and they are recognized at the national conventions

The region has not received our insurance certificate yet
elections

three board members are term limited this year: Jay Manning, Caleb Van Der Brink, and Tom Gay

the following board members have one more year left on their terms: Kevin Dill, Kennedy Gauger, Rich Holzapfel, and Ron Olsen

If we can't find anyone for the positions, we're a non-functioning region

Other Business/Comments

for the 2023 national convention, you can register for a hotel right now; the banquet will be a Texas barbecue

Kevin asked if it would be possible to do these board meetings by Zoom instead of phone call

the board will be meeting again in late April to discuss some of the questions raised about upcoming conventions; Ron Olsen will schedule

Adjournment – a motion to adjourn was presented and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Ron Olson, Secretary

President's Farewell Note

FRIENDS

My time as President of the Thousand Lakes Region is coming to a close, a new President will be elected at the May 2022 convention. As I look back over the last five and a half years it has been an interesting roller coaster of ups and downs. The Thousand Lakes Region covers 4 states and part of Canada, the wide ranging COVID rules severely impacted the Region. The TLR has persevered in spite of COVID; we cancelled a convention, saw the cancellation of numerous train shows and events where the hobby has traditionally been on display. We did not have a 2020 convention; several Board positions that were up for election were willingly filled by the incumbents so there was no loss in continuity. I have tried to maintain a focus on communication within the Divisions and the Region throughout with the goal that no member feel left behind. I think the largest accomplishment was the changing of the FUSEE from paper to an electronic version. That change spearheaded by Kevin Dill opened doors to even greater opportunities to communicate informative information to all members—we went from 8 pages to 48 pages over a short period of time with numerous clinics presented on ways to improve modeling skills.

As the Region began its start back to normal, Divisions worked with host institutions, State, and local health officials as we slowly learned that it was possible to host a train show with vendors and hold a Region Convention. Being careful was the banner thought. Participants were more than willing to follow the guidelines set down by hosts. Momentum began to build, slowly at first, and with a “full speed ahead” approach as time moved forward. Attendance reports from model trains shows clearly indicated there was, and still is, a pent-up demand for opportunities to view, learn and purchase---attendance records are regularly being set across the Region. The 2021 TLR convention convened in Bismarck, ND with a slightly smaller total attendance. The clinics were very well attended, the Contest Room with its improvements had a high participation rate, the tours were well planned and executed (including several members photographed riding on a small kid's train) and the socializing was as happy as ever.

As the Thousand Lakes Region moves forward in the coming years it is my pleasure to point out that the Region is healthy, with growing numbers of activities and opportunities to present the hobby to the public. I encourage each Division to seek out opportunities to make presentations at public gatherings. Momentum is building for the hobby, let us not lose focus on growth.

It has been my privilege to lead the Region for the past years both as Convention Director and Region President. I look forward to continuing to participate in future TLR activities and helping the hobby grow.

Jay Manning

President, Thousand Lakes Region

Region Round-up

DSED (Scott Nesbit) – went to the threshing bee in July; Washington Pavillion in Sioux Falls in August; Lake Area Technical College in Watertown in September; October at the library in Sioux Falls; November was trains at Christmas – big crowd and community education program as well as new members, activities included making a T-Trak module; December was a small setup at a bank, the Minnehaha Country Club, and Christmas show; January was the downtown library which had a good turnout – the biggest weekend they’ve had in a long time; they will be at Lincoln, NE, in two weeks; T-Trak is gaining momentum in the area.

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Region Roundup—model railroad-related events in and around the TLR

Mar 5	North Metro RR Club Show	VFW Club, Coon Rapids, MN
Mar 6	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Mar 11-12	Twin Cities Division Spring Modeler’s Retreat	Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth.
Mar 19-20	3 Rivers RR Club Train Show	The Omni Center, Onalaska, WI
Mar 26-27	Greater Sioux Falls Model train Show	Multicultural Center, Sioux Falls, SD
April 2	Greater Upper Midwest Train Show & Sale	Century College, White Bear Lake, MN
April 3	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
April 9-10	Titletown Train Show	KI Convention Center, Green Bay, WI
April 9	Newport Train Club Train Show	Woodbury High School, Woodbury, MN.
April 13	Prairie Lakes Division Spring Meet	Dickinson County Expo Center, Spirit Lake, IA
April 14	Greater Upper Midwest Train Show	Century College, White Bear Lake, MN
Mar 1	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL.
May 7	Twin Cities Model Railroad Club	Education Building, MN State Fairgrounds
May 14	Granite City Train Show	Rivers Edge Convention Center, St Cloud, MN
May 19-22	TLR Annual Convention	Brainerd, MN
May 22	C&NW Historical Society Convention/Swap Meet	Mayo Health Event Center, Mankato, MN
June 5	Great Midwest Train Show	DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL
Aug 7-13	NMRA National Convention,	St. Louis, MO
Aug 12	National Train Show	Collinsworth, IL
Sept 17	Twin Cities Model Railroad Club	Education Building, MN State Fairgrounds
Oct 16	Spud Valley Model Railroad Show	Red River Valley Fairgrounds, West Fargo, ND

Model Railroad Contact Page

Advertise your railroad here! Send me a photo, business card or whatever contact info you want to provide. This a service for the TLR and there is no charge for the ad.

Great Northern
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3920 15th St S
 Fargo, ND 58104
701-298-0132



If you would like to have your model railroad presented here so other modelers can contact you and arrange visits, email Dillkev@aol.com. I will need you contact information and you can provide a photo. This is a FREE service for TLR members.

The Thousand Lakes Region of the NMRA

Board of Directors

President

Jay Manning
7100 West Stoney Creek St
Sioux Falls, SD 57106
804-712-8056
Chessie@manningperry.com

Vice President

Caleb Van Der Brink
1226 8th Ave NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250
712-578-1029
calebvanderbrink@yahoo.com

Secretary

Ron Olsen
8245 Henslowe Ave. S.
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
651-283-1669.
rjolsen2022@gmail.com

Treasurer

Tom Gay
2015 Rose Creek Dr
Fargo, ND 58104
701-219-0300
tomandkath@hotmail.com

Convention Director

Rich Holzapfel
24675 48th Ave
Sherman, SD 57030
605-610-6732
Hozerfarmer1@gmail.com

Public Relations

Kevin Dill
3920 15th St S
Fargo, ND 58104
701-298-0132
Dillkev@aol.com

Contest Director

Kennedy Gauger
4500 South Lewis Ave.
Sioux Falls SD 57103
210-573-1294
wkgauger@gmail.com

Department Chairs

Membership

Art Suel
14500 Alabama Ave
Savage, MN 55378
952-440-6409
artsuel1956@gmail.com

Achievement Program

John Hotvet MMR
5100 Nicollet Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55419
612-822-5788
johnttrain@aol.com

Historian

MK Lentz
2825 Elm St N
Fargo, ND 58102
701-298-8408
mkl@janushd.com

Webmaster

Caleb Van Der Brink
1226 8th avenue NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250
712-578-1029
calebvanderbrink@yahoo.com

Fusee Editor

Kevin Dill
3920 15th St S
Fargo, ND 58104
701-298-0132
Dillkev@aol.com

Social Media

Thomas Gasior, MMR
763-291-0708
tgasior@hotmail.com

Division Supers

Dakota Southeastern

Scott Nesbit
5415 W. Dardenella Rd
#107
Sioux Falls, SD 57106
605-360-0185
drthud@msn.com

Minnesota River Valley

Brian Wordes
Sacred Heart, MN
320-400-9205
brigayle@rswb.coop

No. 1 Northern

Ian H. Plett
337 Regent Ave W
Winnipeg, MB R2C 1R5
ianplett@gmail.com

Prairie Lakes

Jay Davis
207 Ocheyedon St.
Everly, IA 51338
712 834-2073
jdandice22c@hotmail.com

South Red River Valley

MK Lentz
2825 Elm St N
Fargo, ND 58102
701-298-8408
mkl@janushd.com

Southeastern

Gerry Miller
1040 HawkeyeDr
Dubuque, IA 52001
563-557-9646
millerg20@gmail.com

Twin Cities

Art Suel
14500 Alabama Ave
Savage, MN 55378
952-440-6409
artsuel1956@gmail.com

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